Oklahoma Chess Monthly

JULY 2020

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma

The Man in the Red Beret Wears a Red Mask

In This Issue:

• An Over-The-Board Tourney!
• Hey Jude!
• IM Donaldson Book Review
• Plus News Bites, Game of the Month, Puzzles, Top 25 List, Tournament Reports, and more.

Editor's Note

Chess activity in June continued to be dominated by the effects of the Coronavirus, even as most of the nation was attempting to open up from the lockdown.

But this month Oklahoma bucked that trend as the OCA decided to go ahead with its annual tournament, the Oklahoma Open. A report begins next page.

Last month's article honoring Robert Ware received a high amount of positive feedback. A few of the interesting responses are reprinted below.

I decided therefore to publish an update on another eccentric chess character I've written about before – one of the most colorful players of this region – Senior Master Jude Acers of New Orleans. For those of you new to chess, this will serve as an interesting introduction to this chess showman. In addition to reprinting my last article about him, from 2007, I provide an update, and show that he is still up to the same antics from his table in the French Quarter…

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Checking the Coronavirus

OCA Holds Oklahoma Open Despite Nationwide Cancellations Extending into August. Stephen Gehly Wins Title

The unconfirmed report is that it was the only over-the-board tournament in America the weekend of June 27-28 when the OCA held its annual tournament, the Oklahoma Open, in Broken Arrow.

Hopes among chess players a few months ago of a return to normalcy for the summer chess season had been dissipating in June as cancellations continued to roll in, stretching even into August. The iconic U.S. Open was cancelled, the World Open, and many others. Even in the Heartland long-time traditional events bit the dust. Just a couple weeks previously the KCA announced cancellation of the Kansas Open that had been slated for July 11-12. As far as I know, there are still major events scheduled for Labor Day Weekend, such as the annual Southwest Open in Texas; but who knows how long they will stand. As I write this, virus cases are on an uptick.

But OCA stubbornly decided to go ahead. There was some criticism of doing this for an event that is supposed to be a state championship, since many players couldn't attend, and also the event that is supposed to select a senior representative for the state in the national tournament of senior champions. Most seniors could not risk coming to such an event now.

However, the event morphed from a championship to something more of a 'chess experiment.' Could it be done? What kind of response would it receive? What lessons learned?

The good news is that the OCA's experience with the Oklahoma might provide some hope for other OTB tourneys coming soon. The event had a larger turnout than expected despite the virus threat and despite the reduced prize fund. 46 players attended, and they were not all kids either. At least four seniors were there, and some players in their 30s and 40s, although young players still predominated.

It seems clear from this turnout that there was a hunger for in-person chess after the last four months of a steady diet of only online play. Several of those I talked to remarked that they missed the personal interaction and competition not present on the Internet.

My general impression that the safety precautions at the event provided by TDs Charles M Unruh and Chuck Unruh were as well done as possible under the circumstances and appeared adequate. There was only one board per table, providing social distance except between the two players.

All players were required to wear masks, which were provided if you did not have your own. More on the precautions and lessons learned below.

The Results

The field included four Okies with expert ratings and was topped by New Jersey NM Ted Belanoff (2238), as well as many talented young Class A and B players.

In the end, Belanoff and Stephen Gehly (1958) tied for first with 4-1 scores, with Gehly winning the title on tiebreak (and incidentally raising his rating to the 2000 barrier for the first time). Congratulations Stephen.

Top boards for the last round. Foreground, Gehly vs. Ryan Amburgy. Background, Balanoff vs. Veronika Zilajeva. *(Photo: Josie Braddy)*

Gehly defeated Amburgy in the crucial game, while Zilajeva could only get a draw with Belanoff, leaving her tied for 3rd-6th with Amburgy, Charles M. Unruh, and Adley Bufford. Adley had a noteworthy event, raising his class B rating way up into class A for the first time, and he continues to improve rapidly.

Full crosstable: https://bit.ly/3dKxKeu

Adley Bufford

The U1600 Section was won by Arkansas unrated player Joseph Smith, who scored an undefeated 4-1 and earned his first provisional rating of 1646, remarkably high for a first rating. Reports are he is in military service. Istvan Szabad, Viktorija Zilajeva, and Jacob Schulz tied for 2nd–4th with 3½ points. Jacob gained nearly 150 rating points.

Joseph Smith (left) vs veteran Bruce Wells in the last round.

The U1000 Section saw yet another name from the Zilajevs family at the top of the crosstable. This time it was young Alex Zilajevs playing in his first tournament and scoring 4-1 to tie for 1st with Lucas Ballinger and William Hutson II.

The talented Zilajevs family — Veronika, Victorija, and Alex — is starting to dominate things around Oklahoma, look out! They tied for 3rd, 2nd, and 1st in their respective sections.

Rubin Wells of Ardmore was awarded the Senior representative spot for Oklahoma.

OSCO Concerns for Next Season

The lingering coronavirus threat has raised concerns about OSCO's ability to put on a 2020-21 season of scholastic chess events. Will adult tournament directors be willing to work in an event full of kids? OSCO president Chris Amburgy said,

"I think the bigger challenge is figuring out venues. Will schools even allow us to have events? Will we have to limit attendance? A typical OSCO event has 100-200 kids plus parents."

"The OSCO board plans to meet in July to discuss plans for the 2020-21 season but there will certainly be changes. I'll report more when the board meets."

Lessons Learned from the Event

I asked TD Chuck Unruh, who is also a U.S. Chess Board Member, if he thought this event would provide useful data for other organizers hoping to plan an event soon. He had many remarks:

"Yes, other event sponsors stand to benefit from our experience. We found out tournament chess players will wear masks but shy away from protective gloves. The solution was ample hand sanitizer. In the future, each table of 4 players should have available a bottle of hand sanitizer. Noncontact temperature readings were a plus but only lower the COVID 19 risk should a player unknowingly enter when asymptomatic."

"After each round, the tables and chairs were cleaned with disinfectant. However, few if any players desired to wipe down the chess pieces and boards before each round. Originally, the tables were set for one board or two players for the lateral social distancing of at least 6 feet. We under-

Continued on page 14

Feedback Comments on Robert Ware

Last month's feature presenting my previous article on Robert Ware, and updating us all with more info on this eccentric player's heroic background, received an unusually high amount of feedback. Here are some samples:

Lou Hays:

"I really enjoyed reading the Robert Ware article. I met and played chess with him in the church basement in the early 70s as well. I even bought a copy of his booklet. I never had the nerve to open a game with 1.f3. After nearly 50 years, the one thing I remember about his pamphlet was Ware's comment that went something like, "don't try this opening against 1900's and over. It doesn't work against these super players."

"I remember Robert Ware as a kind and gentle man. I was an intimidated 1300 player from Muskogee when I started going to Tulsa chess club meetings. Robert made me feel at home was always willing to play against me."

Joe Veal:

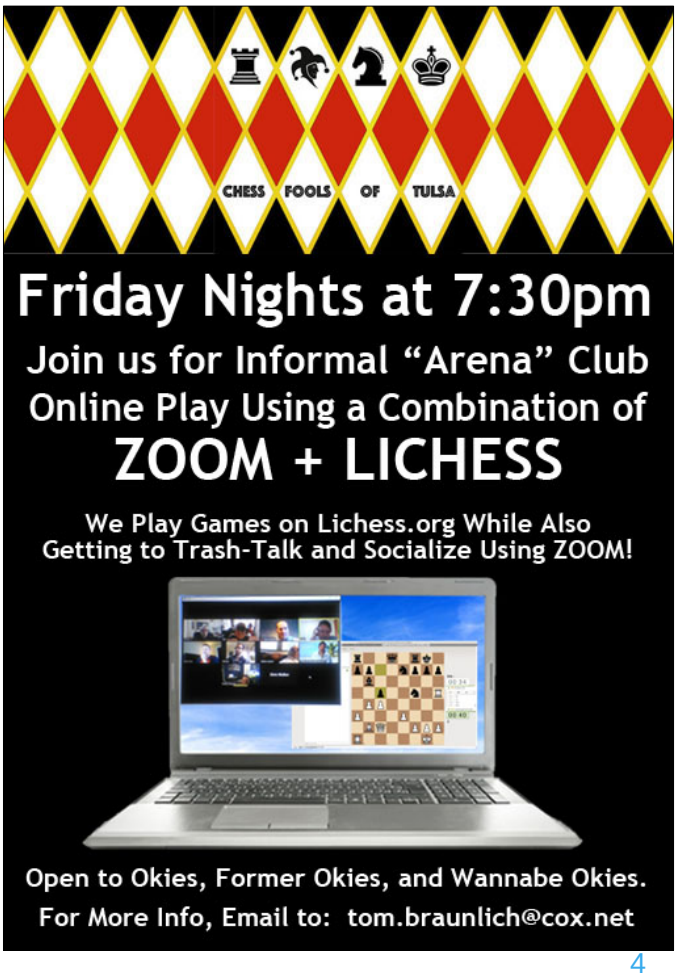
"I loved the story behind the Ware Opening. Mr. Ware was a fascinating gentleman who went his own way in the opening."

"Ironically, for a brief moment in time, I dabbled in this opening in speed games online and live. I played it exclusively in bullet games(1 0) and was able to get a 1880 bullet rating on chess.com. I had no idea it was called the Ware Opening. Unlike Thatcher, I played it the same way as Ware with g3, Bg2, 00, and Nf2 as White and g6, Bg7, 00, Nf7 as black. The way I saw the opening was that it was a mutated version of the KIA. It was very effective with players 2000 and below because they did not figure out the 'h-pawn' idea until a few too many losses with a kingside pawn roller. There were times that I trotted it out against IM Patel and one time NM Hulsey. Hulsey knew the h-pawn push variation and summarily crushed me. Patel figured it out on game 2. ..."

NM Robert Harrington:

"I really enjoyed your article on Robert Ware. I knew Mr. Ware and I had also played at the same chess club at that church. It brought back fond memories! Obviously, if you knew Robert Ware you knew about his "famous" opening. I, like you, knew nothing of his past. Very interesting."

"My brother, Steve, played in the memorial chess tournament that you mentioned. Steve got a kick out of playing in that event. I know it is not nice to brag, but I have an autographed copy of *The Ware Opening*! When he signed it he put the date too — 9/24/78."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Hey Jude:

An Update on the Man in the Red Beret

by Tom Braunlich

In 2007 I published a story about one of the greatest showmen in Caissa's realm, the irascible Senior Master Jude Acers, of New Orleans. It's time for an update, as it appears a video documentary is due out soon about him. First, for those of you who don't know Jude, let's revisit the original article for the introduction and then I will follow up with some news…

Hey Jude

By Tom Braunlich (Jan 2007, OCQ)

The other day I came across an old picture that reminded me of my encounter with America's most unique chess master — *Jude Acers*.

Jude on the left; me on the right, when I had hair.

In 1981 I was down in New Orleans with a girlfriend and another couple. We stopped at a nice shady open-air restaurant *(The Gazebo)* in the French Quarter with its street performers, souvenir sellers, and portrait artists. While we were waiting for our food a man with a red beret came and set up a folding card table and two rickety chairs inside the restaurant's shady sidewalk plaza. He then proceeded to set up a chessboard, and propped up a sign that said he would take on all comers at $5 per game, and you didn't have to pay if you won.

I knew who he was, of course, as I had heard

> "Jude Acers is an incredible character with boundless infectious energy."
>
> — *GM Walter Browne*

of the famous Jude Acers. A strong senior master during the 1960s when he battled with such players as Browne, Tarjan, and others in the San Francisco bay area (and still officially rated 2400), Acers had left the tournament scene completely by the early 1980s and instead made a living with chess on the streets of New Orleans. He was also famous for going on long "tours" of exhibitions (in all 50 states) and twice held world records for simultaneous exhibitions.

I was impressed by his quiet professionalism as he sat there at the restaurant, silently waiting like a spider for an unsuspecting gnat to fall into his chess web. His sign said he took Visa, MasterCard, and American Express! This was obviously his business, and he respected it; so others did too.

Naturally my friends insisted I play him, and I did. "I should warn you, I'm pretty good." I said as I sat down. He smiled and nodded as if he hadn't heard that phrase literally thousands of times before. The picture here shows us in play sometime during the game.

We played without a clock, but moved fairly

TOP 25

For JULY 2020

Active Oklahoma Players

	Player	This Month	Change	
1	Advait Patel	2537	0	
2	Jeffrey Haskel	2355	-7	
3	Howard Zhong	2307	0	
4	Bart Gibbons	2217	0	
5	Tom Braunlich	2200	0	
6	Mark Hulsey	2199	0	
7	Ryan Amburgy	2139	0	
8	Adonis Turner	2084	0	▲
9	Anthony Paolercio	2080	0	▲
10	Veronika Zilajeva	2080	9	▲
11	Tom Patton	2077	0	
12	Charles D Unruh	2063	0	▲
13	James Long	2053	0	▲
14	Michael Nugent	2042	0	▲
15	Matt Dalthorp	2029	0	▲
16	Charles M Unruh	2024	-9	▲
17	Chuck Johnson	2010	0	▲
18	Jeff Colbert	2008	0	▲
19	Stephen Gehly	2000	42	▲
20	David Luscomb	1995	-50	▼
21	Logan Zachare	1984	4	
22	Joe Dean Veal	1941	-18	
23	Charles Woodall	1937	0	▲
24	Paul Hodgden	1935	0	▲
25	Wayne Hatcher	1926	0	

Player of the Month

STEPHEN GEHLY

Stephen won the Oklahoma Open playing for the first time in a year, and broke the 2000 barrier to become Oklahoma's latest expert.

quickly anyway. I recall the opening was a Caro-Kann with me as white, beginning 1. e4, c6 2. d4, d5 3. Nc3, dxe4 4. Nxe4, Nf6 5. Nxf6, exf6 (Even in those days this move was considered somewhat inferior to gxf6, and I knew what to do against it. I'm sure he had his reasons for playing it.) 6. c3. White has a slight edge due to the pawn structure. I don't recall the remaining moves, but basically we traded queens early resulting in him getting a weak pawn on e6 that I won with doubled rooks not too long afterward.

When his position became hopeless, instead of resigning he just mumbled something, reached down into his duffle bag, pulled out a chess clock, and said "Now we'll play for real," as he reset the pieces. I protested that my meal had come and I needed to get back, but he insisted on at least a 5-minute speed game. I relented and this time I chatted with him as we played. I told him I had recently earned a master rating, and he said that our game had been the first game he'd lost in months. I mentioned we had a mutual friend (Rollie Tesh, 1974 Oklahoma Jr. Champion). Tesh had met him in the 1970s when he worked briefly for Ken Smith's company *Chess Digest* in Dallas. Acers and Smith were good friends. We talked about that a bit, and somewhere along the line I hung a rook or something and resigned. As I said goodbye and stood to leave he very professionally requested his $5 bucks! I hadn't realized the speed chess game was "on the meter." But I paid him anyway, gladly.

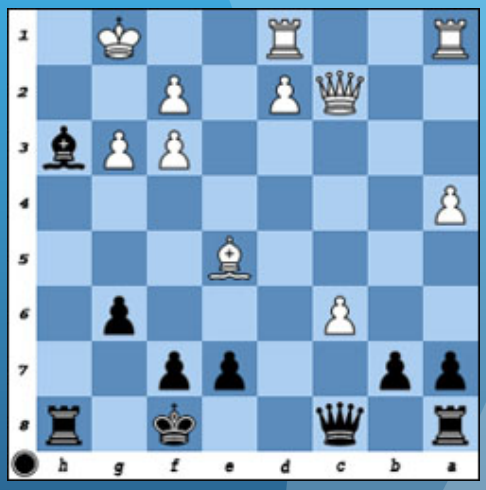
The rest of the time we were in that restaurant Acers sat there at his table, back straight, eyes straight ahead, perfectly still; waiting patiently for the next insect to fly into his web.

This is the image of Jude Acers I have in my mind. And truthfully, even though I know very little about him, he has always been somewhat of a chess hero for me. I admire his unabashed love for the game, his total dedication despite a lack of tournament ambition, and his willingness to sacrifice personal comfort for a life filled with the

PUZZLES

Answers Next Page

BLACK to move and win. (Medium)



Black to move and win. (Medium)

joys of chess.

And yet, his life has been anything but limited to the streets. He grew up in an orphanage, yes, but managed to live — through chess — a life that has spanned the nation and touched the heart of our culture's most chaotic times. During the turbulent 1960s, Acers, who had become a young chess master at age 17, roamed the country as a perpetually broke chess hustler. He ended up at the famous "Haight-Ashbury" district, the epicenter of anti-war '60s rock'n'roll counterculture in California. One of the well known stories about Jude is that for a while Janis Joplin, the famous rock singer who died of a drug overdose just a few years later, lived in the same old rooming house as Acers. An article by Matthew Teague in the *Oxford American*, quotes Acers telling his well-known story about Janis… "One day during a party I was in the bathtub, where it was quiet, reading, and Janis came in, naked, and sat down on the toilet. She looked at me and said, "Funny, funny Jude. You play with your little pieces all day long, and you know what? … You'll live to be an old, old man someday."

MORNING ADVOCATE, Baton Rouge, Sat., Sept. 19, 1964 9-A

YOUNG MASTER—Jude F. Acers, 20, captain of the LSU chess team and holder of the LSU and Baton Rouge championship titles, this week received a master's title from the United States Chess Federation. The rating is based on points amassed by Acers in 73 tournaments and 23 matches. Acers is the only chess player in the state to hold the Chess Federation's master title.

During these raw hustler years Acers (whose name is pronounced with a hard "k" sound for the "c") experienced life on poverty's edge and came away with many such stories. One time he

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) The obvious check 1…Nf3+ should be the first move looked at, but most people discard it when they see the knight quickly gets trapped and lost. Don't give up so soon!
2. Kf2 Qxh2+ 3. Kxf3 the knight is lost, but notice how the king is very exposed. Can we mate him? Yes! **3. … Bg4+! 4. Kxg4 Qh5** mate!

(2) Ding – Dubov, 2020 online game.
Again, as in the above puzzle, black can try to invade white's light squares by jumping in with a piece to enable the queen to come in: 1. … Bg2!! 2. g4
(If 2. Kxg2 then of course 2…Qh3+ and …Qh1mate.)
(If 2. Bxh8, then again 2. … Qh3 will mate next move.)
2. … Bxf3 *(threatening…Rh1 or …Qxg4)* 3. Bg7+ Kg8! 0-1

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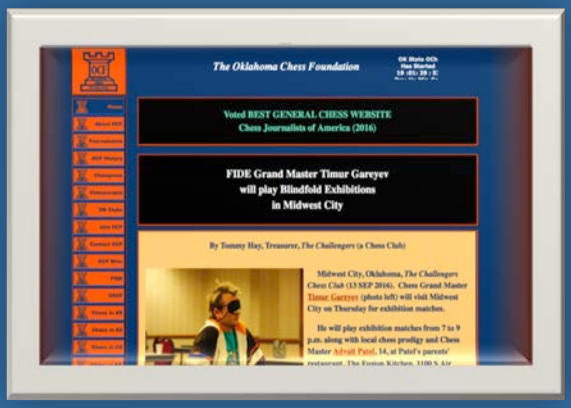
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FIDE Grand Master Timur Gareyev
will play Blindfold Exhibitions
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… and more

was hustling chess with a guy in a seedy apartment late at night in a very bad urban neighborhood. Up about $110 when he tried to leave, the loser went berserk, grabbed the money in one hand and a meat cleaver in the other. Jude blocked the first cleaver blow with his copy of *Chess Openings: Theory and Practice*. After a wild brawl he escaped through a back door and over a 12-foot wall; but his precious chess book and his eyeglasses were left behind. He told his story to the police, and pleaded with them to get his property back … he needed the book and simply couldn't afford another pair of glasses. (He is very nearsighted). The skeptical police knocked on the dark apartment door, which was answered by the loser's wife, who claimed no knowledge of the whole incident. The policeman whispered to her, ""Ma'am, we're not after anyone. There is no problem. During the night he was here playing chess in your kitchen with someone. We believe there is a blue and black book, maybe some eyeglasses there. Will you look for us?... There is no case, no filed complaint. It's O.K. He doesn't want his money back. Just the book, the glasses." She goes away and to the surprise of the cops she comes back a minute later with the book and glasses. *Chess Openings: Theory and Practice* has a big meat-cleaver-size gash in it.

An article in *Northwest Chess* by Casey Bush, a long and insightful interview with Acers, summed up his personality well. "Jude's enthusiasm for the future is infectious. His hunger for the present is inspiring. What I liked most about Jude is how he has lived his life. He is a true pedestrian in a motorized world. He is a non-materialist who owns only what he needs." (The article goes on to describe a visit to Acers' tiny, bare, chessbook-filled apartment near the restaurant.)

But make no mistake — Acers is no simple "dropout" street hustler. Acers remains well informed on the game and from 1974-2005 frequently wrote insightful commentaries or analysis to Larry Evans that were published in his *Chess Life* column. He is said to have amazingly extensive knowledge of chess theory and history, as well as countless colorful anecdotes he uses in his personal appearances. He has also made a career as "the greatest chess lecturer and exhibition player of all time." Since the mid-70s (and as recently as 2004) he has regularly gone on nationwide chess "tours" performing exhibitions at all sorts of venues, from bookstores to prisons, and twice held the record for the largest simultaneous exhibition (1976 Guiness Book of World Records, 179 opponents). He has written chess books and been the subject of many feature articles (even appearing on ABC's "20/20"). He does everything a famous senior master does – except play in tournaments!

> "What I liked most about Jude is how he has lived his life. He is a true pedestrian in a motorized world. He is a non-materialist who owns only what he needs."."
>
> *— Casey Bush, Northwest Chess*

Acers continued after I met him that one time in 1981 to make his living this way playing chess nearly every day for money at the "Gazebo" restaurant — and he still does today.

When the dikes failed after Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans was flooded in September, 2005, there was some concerns expressed on the internet chat rooms about the fate of Jude Acers. Apparently for a while he was considered to be missing by his friends. Eventually word spread that he was okay, and an email from him was circulated. "I was evacuated to the terrific 4H camp refugee center in Greenville, Tennessee, after nine days of gunshots all over the place. Looting, helicopters, total darkness, candles, little food, water, dying radio batteries. I will never in my life take food and water for granted again. I drained the hot water heater of its stored water – this saved me. I ran the night gauntlet to a military kitchen to get rations in the night

for my 80 year old landlord, who would not leave the city without his dog…"

Apparently it was just one more escapade in a life full of uncanny adventures. Typically, Acers managed in philosophical fashion to turn the whole event into a positive experience, "I worked three days in the CNN-featured Eddie Horner Food Kitchen. He really is a miracle organizer, believe me, and stops at nothing to feed people. I am the guy in the red beret in some CNN footage, hauling ice and putting soft drinks and water into the chests, washing many a pot and pan, opening beans." He didn't let a little thing like a disaster get him down.

My guess is that by now he is back with his trademark red beret at his old chess corner in New Orleans.

I'm sure there is much more to say about Jude Acer's life, and he is famous for his own stories, but to me these anecdotes point to a man who is still living the 1960s motto of "Do your own thing, man!" For Acers, his "thing" was chess; and he found a simple and honorable way to do it that keeps him satisfied. Acers once wrote that his weakness as a hustler (compared to other game hustlers he knew like Walter Browne) was that he could never bring himself to intentionally throw a game or two to keep a fish hooked on the line. It just wasn't in his nature; his approach to making a living from chess was too straightforward for that.

Tesh says that Acers once told him about the first time he heard the famous Beatles song "Hey Jude" on the radio … he actually thought the song was about him! He thought the Beatles were trying to tell him something!

Well, perhaps they were:

Hey, Jude, don't make it bad….
Take a sad song and make it better….
Remember to let her into your heart…
Then you can start, to make it better….

UPDATE:

THE MAN IN THE RED BERET

In 2020 Jude Acers is still going strong, and still has his table by the restaurant in the French Quarter of New Orleans – except these days he is also wearing a red mask!

Documentary Movie

In 2014 a *Kickstarter* fundraising drive raised seed money for a proposed documentary movie about Acers, titled "The Man in the Red Beret." Part of the movie involved following 73-year-old Acers as he ventured to Eastern Europe to play in the World Senior Championship. The movie is to explore his chess-filled philosophies and energetic style, including the fact he has become a well-known celebrity in New Orleans. The movie is supposed to be still in production but so far it does not seem to have been released, although a post in 2018 from the producers promised it was coming soon.

There is however a 'trailer' for the movie that makes a great 'teaser' introduction to Acer's personality and is worth a look:

https://vimeo.com/229849880
Should be interesting when it comes out.

Recently The Morphy Chess & Cultural Center opened in N.O. and Acers now works there some as well as at his usual spot by the Gazebo restaurant.

Finally, here is a nice mini-documentary done by a college student, "Too Busy to Die":
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCmf98nX4uI

"A person is responsible for his world; and you're interested in living or you're not. It's your choice." — Jude Acers

U.S. Open Invitational Events Online

U.S.Chess has announced that it will hold the National Invitationals for State Champions (Scholastic and Senior events) on chess.com.

Denker	Grades 9-12	July 25-26
Barber	Grades 6-8	August 1-2
Rockefeller	Grades K-5	August 1-2
Haring	Girls K-12	July 25-26
Senior	Adults 50+	July 25-26 & Aug 1-2

The Senior rep for Oklahoma will be Rubin Wells. Spectators should be able to watch the games live on chess.com.

The players will be required to have two webcams connected during play and showing them on Zoom. Significant national titles are at stake, so the potential for cheating is present.

World's Smallest Handmade Playable Chess Set

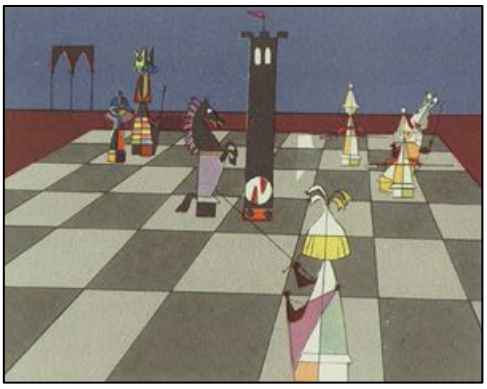
Ara Ghazaryan of Los Angeles achieved a new world's record for the smallest playable chess set and board recently.

The board is just 15.3mm (0.6 inches) square, and each of its 64 squares were made of Brazilian Cherry Wood or 18kt. White gold. The tiny pieces were hand carved. It weighs just 0.23 ounces, and you need tweezers to move the pieces, but it is perfectly playable. The image shows it lying next to a Quarter for size comparison. Not recommended for blitz…

Chess Can Put You in the International News

Chess stuff crops up in the strangest of places. Rebecca Rutledge sends this news item clipped form, of all places, a website for the "Bulgarian Telegraph Agency". It features recent info on the coronavirus in California, from an AP report. The illustrative photo shows two chess-players wearing masks, and the "John Williams" mentioned in the caption is none other than our own Jake Williams. "He said he has no idea how/why this was published there." I think maybe its because the Bulgarians were shocked to see that people in California actually know how to play chess…

БЪЛГАРСКА ТЕЛЕГРАФНА АГЕНЦИЯ
Virus Outbreak California
24 June 2020 / 03:35
Wearing face coverings, John Williams, right, and Jeff Lee play chess Tuesday, June 23, 2020, in Santa Monica, Calif. The state Department of Public Health recorded more than 5,000 new cases Tuesday, putting the total number of positive cases at more than 183,000. The state has seen more than 5,500 deaths related to COVID-19. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)
Source: AP



GM Walter Browne
SM Jude Acers [C43]
Jan 1971 Training Match, 1971

[Notes by Tom Braunlich]

Jude Acers played two matches with fellow vagabond GM Walter Browne, one when they were both teenagers that Browne won 4-0, and this one later, in 1971, which ended in a tie.

Acers won this, the first game of the match, and he considers it one of his best. It was voted a top 10 opening novelty of 1971 by *Informant*.

In his autobiography "The Stress of Chess" Browne says, "He hit me with a blockbuster novelty in the Petroff opening and played magnificently to score the full point." The game was played in Berkeley California, between 4am and 7am!

To further set the stage, Walter Browne at this time, at only age 21, was already becoming a world-class grandmaster. Browne was hot off playing a very exciting mind-boggling 98-move draw with *Bobby Fischer*, in which Browne was up the exchange in a complex ending and near-winning the whole way. Throughout 1971 Browne won tournament after tournament around the world. So for Acers to get a crack at him at this time was a key moment of his career, and he came through with this fine game:

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4

[This tricky way of playing against the Petroff is out of fashion now.]

3...Nxe4 4.Bd3 d5 5.Nxe5 Bd6 6.0-0 0-0 7.c4

[White takes advantage of black's advanced N in order to blow open the center and begin tactics.]

7...Bxe5 [The most aggressive move. 7...c6 and 7...Nc6 are also possible.]

8.dxe5 Nc6 9.cxd5 Qxd5 10.Qc2

[This move forces the action, by hitting the N at a time when it is pinned (...Nc5 loses the h-pawn with check). Black is essentially losing the N on e4, but hopes to win a rook in return...]

10...Nb4

[At the time of this game, one of the few GM games in this position had gone: 10...Bf5 11.Nc3 Nxc3 12.Bxf5 Nd4 13.Bxh7+ Kh8 14.Qd3 Nce2+ 15.Kh1 Qxe5 16.Qh3 Nf4 17.Bxf4 Qxf4 18.Rad1 c5 19.Be4+ Qh6 20.Qc3 Qf4 21.Qxc5 Qxe4 22.Rxd4 Qe2 23.Kg1 Rfd8 24.Qc3 1-0 (46) Minic,D - Andric,D Belgrade 1968;

Note that Black can try 10...Nc5 but 11.Bxh7+ Kh8 12.Be3 Ne6 13.Nc3 Qxe5 14.Be4 favors white, due to black's weak K and the 2Bs.]

11.Bxe4 Nxc2 12.Bxd5

[So white has won a piece, but black's knight hopes to grab a rook and live to tell the tale...]

12...Bf5 [12...Nxa1? 13.Be4 would take the key diagonal leading to the c2 'escape square' and ensure the knight remains trapped.]

13.g4 (Wanting to deflect that bishop.)

13... Bg6!?N

[Acer's theoretical novelty. In 1971 the only predecessor game in this line, which both masters knew of, was this one: 13...Bxg4 14.Be4 The N is now trapped, and white ends up with the advantage of two pieces for a rook. 14...Nxa1 15.Nc3 f6 16.exf6 Rxf6 17.Be3 Bf3 18.Bxf3 Rxf3 19.Rxa1 and with two pieces for a rook white went on to win in Vaganian – Piesina, Riga 1968.

However, Acers has explained that by luck he had looked at this line with veteran California senior master ***C. Bill Jones***, who had shown black could disregard the free pawn and play ...Bg6 here. This was the 'blockbuster novelty' Browne mentioned.

The interesting thing, however, is that modern GMs almost invariably choose ...Bxg4 anyway, even after this key game. In my database, there are 92 games with ...Bxg4 and only 4 with ... Bg6!

Why? We'll try to answer that question…

One reason may be Petroff players saw how Karpov treated this position just a couple years later to earn an "easy draw" against Tal: 13...Bxg4 14.Be4 Nxa1 15.Nc3 Bh3! 16.Re1 f5 17.exf6 Rae8! 18.Bd2 Rxe4 19.Nxe4 Nc2 20.Rc1 Nd4 21.Rxc7 Rf7 22.Rxf7 Nf3+ 23.Kh1 Kxf7 24.fxg7 Kxg7 25.Be3 b6 and here to get his king out of the corner white has to trade knights into a drawn endgame. Tal-Karpov 1974.

Still, according to the database black scores only a miserable 36% with the ...Bxg4 pawn grab; proving it isn't an easy draw!]

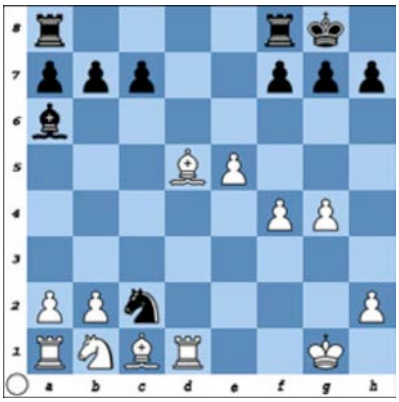
14.f4

[The threat to seal out the Bishop with f4-f5 seems to be the only try for advantage for white.]

14...Bd3

[14...c6!? may be a new TN worth trying for black. Then, if 15.Bf3 Bd3 16.Rd1 Rad8 etc. Black seems to get play similar to the game.]

15.Rd1 Ba6



16.Nc3?!

[Apparently this move is the culprit. My silicon says 16.Be4 Nxa1 17.Be3! *(*Perhaps Browne only looked at *17.Nc3* which allows *17...Rad8* and an edge for black. But Be3 allows the clever development of the N to d2 now, trapping black's brave knight*.)* 17...Rad8 18.Nd2! and white is near winning, i.e.: 18...Be2 19.Rxa1 Bxg4 Here white is much better. Even though black has R+P for two pieces, white's 2Bs and central control dominate the board.

This must be the line the GMs know about! Can any of you Petroff fans out there confirm that?]

16...Nxa1 17.b4!

[Browne is down the exchange, but he can still claim compensation. 17.Be4? Rad8]

17...c6 18.Be4

[White now hopes to win back the N with a coming Bb2 move. But this will allow the trade of rooks and cost a pawn...]

18...Rad8 19.Rd6 Rxd6 20.exd6 Rd8 21.Bb2 Nb3

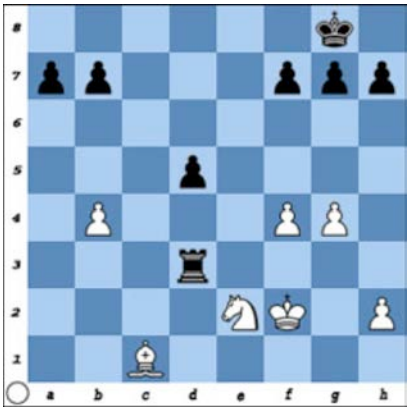
[The brave knight sells its life for a pawn and a shattered white structure.]

22.axb3 Rxd6 23.Ba3 [I thought perhaps 23.Bc1 and Be3 controlling the R's entry squares was more logical, but then 23...Bd3 is strong.]

23...Rd4 24.Kf2 [24.b5! Bxb5 25.Bc5 Rd2 26.Nxb5 cxb5 27.Bxa7 Rb2 28.Bd5 looks about equal and Browne's last chance to draw...]

24...Rd2+ 25.Kg3 Bd3! 26.Bf3 Bc2 27.Bc1 Rd3 28.Ne2 Bxb3 29.Kf2 Bd5 30.Bxd5 cxd5!

[Acers has not only won a pawn but will soon have two passed pawns on the board, a little more than Browne can handle.]



31.Be3 Rb3 32.Bxa7 Rxb4 33.Bd4 b5 34.Ke3 Rb3+ 35.Kd2 [White tries sacking a pawn, as the passive defense of the h-pawn by the retreat: 35.Kf2 Rh3 36.Kg2 Rd3 would leave white tied up and unable to deal with the b-pawn's advance.]

35...Rh3 36.Nc3 Rxh2+ 37.Kc1 [The white king has come to help stop black's b-pawn, but now white's kingside pawns fall...]

37...Rh4 38.Nxd5 Rxg4 39.Kd2 h5 40.Ke2 h4 41.Kf1 h3 42.Bg1 b4 0-1

Not bad for a game played in the wee small hours of the morning!

"This game totally made my career!" Jude Acers would say, many years later, to all who would listen.

Browne won the next game of the match, and the 3rd was a quick draw. The intended fourth game was never played, and the match was left drawn, allowing Acers to claim he drew a match with the six-time U.S. Champion.

Continued from page 3:

estimated the demand and enthusiasm for over the board chess competition during the pandemic. The actual number of players doubled our expectations and resulted in a double of players per table. Rents seem very reasonable and my advice (to other organizers) is to spend the extra funds for a larger room and not assume a very low turnout."

"Another unexpected risk was in the participation of players from outside of Oklahoma. We very much appreciated their attendance and participation, yet the risk factors for going forward with the event were based on local infection and hospitalization statistics. The virus outcomes vary state to state and Oklahoma only had a couple of hundred hospitalizations two weeks before the event."

Unruh continued, "… Many of our chess friends with pre-existing conditions or with ages more susceptible to adverse virus outcomes wisely chose not to participate in the event. …"

"Players were real sports about the masks. The multi-layered cloth masks are hot and understandably an annoyance. OCA provided lighter weight paper masks on location. The paper masks are more comfortable but likely not as effective in stopping viruses."

OCA Board Election

Unruh reports, "With several of our friends in governance not in attendance (to the annual meeting) owing to the pandemic concerns, the current board decided it was in the best interest to serve an uncontested additional year. Next year, we hope more players and volunteers in governance join us in electing the future board members."

"Lastly, the next two weeks are important for OTB chess events. The safety precautions hopefully minimized any serious spread of the virus. If so, Oklahoma Chess will enjoy more events into the Fall season with an ever-watchful concern for the ongoing infection and mortality rates during this serious pandemic."

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

For More Tournament Info Visit the USCF Tournament Site:
www.uschess.org/tlas/upcoming.php

SEP 4 - 7 86th Annual SOUTHWEST OPEN Irving TX

7-SS; G/90+30; Doubletree DFW Airport North, 4441 W. John Carpenter Fwy, Irving TX. Three sections and two scholastic sections. More info: www.dallaschess.com

OCF is working on a slate of events for this fall if Coronavirus cooperates. More info next issue.

Cartoon reprinted from Michigan Chess, Feb. 1977.

A New York Times advertisement for the Bobby Fischer-Bob Hope show.

By IM John Donaldson

Two new books by New in Chess

Kaufman's New Repertoire for Black and White (2019, 456 pages, $32.95) by Grandmaster Larry Kaufman and *Keep it Simple 1.d4* (2019, 425 pages, $29.95) by International Master Christof Sielecki are both first-rate opening repertoire books which frequently recommend lines in which the strategic goal, when possible, is the acquisition of the bishop pair. Beyond this aim the two books are quite different.

This is the third edition of Kaufman's opening repertoire and the second published by New in Chess. While the use of computer engines to evaluate opening lines has become the norm today, Kaufmann is particularly noted for his expertise in this field, especially for his work with Komodo. The analysis is based on work done with a high-powered computer especially built to the author's specifications.

The biggest change compared to the previous edition is the author's return to advocating 1.e4 over 1.d4.

Kaufmann offers both a primary White opening repertoire as well as some interesting and topical sidelines.

For Black things are more complicated. While the Gruenfeld is the proposed answer to 1.d4, no less than three defenses to the Ruy Lopez: the Breyer (9…Nb8), Marshall (8…d5) and Moller (5…Bc5) are offered. The English is met by 1…c5 with 2…Nf6 and 3…d5 and 1…Nf6, 2…g6 and 3…d5. Answers to the London System, Veresov (1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Bg5 h6 – two bishops please!), 1.b3, 1.b4 and 1.f4 are given.

While there is some explanatory prose this is definitely a book for players 2200+. This book offers a particularly good value as it provides a complete repertoire for both Black and White.

German IM Christopher Sielecki's *Keep It Simple-1.e4* received critical acclaim as it should. The rare opening repertoire book that knew its audience well, it checked all the boxes. …

The sequel, *Keep It Simple- 1.d4* is a worthy follow-up with the author achieving the near impossible in carving out a cohesive repertoire based on 1.d4 2.Nf3 and 3.g3 against all but a handful of Black replies. Sielecki does this by having White play highly theoretical openings like the Catalan and Grunfeld, but sidestepping the sharpest lines by delaying c4.

The most amazing magic trick in *Keep It Simple- 1.d4* is how the author makes the Slav and Queen's Gambit Accepted 'disappear' — by adopting the sequence 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.g3. This sequence does not have a reputation for posing any danger for Black as the queen bishop is not locked in with …e6 and can be developed to g4 or f5. So what can White do?

Sielecki, from the ground up, has developed a variation where White plays 1.d4 2.Nf3 3.g3 4.Bg2 5.c4 and 6.Nc3 followed by Qb3 that is full of subtle nuances. White does not castle early as after …Qb6 and an exchange of queen's his king is better placed in the center. Another reason for delaying castling is that after White plays Qb3 and Black answers …Qb6 and White follows up with c5 the move …Qa6 can be sometimes met by the surprising Bf1! Congratulations to Sielecki for his hard work and originality.

This reviewer gives two thumbs up for *Keep It Simple-1.d4*, but with reservations concerning its intended audience. On the back cover the publisher's blurb says the book is appropriate for players from 1500 on up. I do not agree. Much of the subtle play that is required here will pass right over the heads of most players below 2200 who will be better served by first learning the principles of opening play with 1.e4…